DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 394 965 SP 036 679

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TITLE	Exploring Diversity: Literature Themes and Activities for Grades 4-8.
REPORT NO	ISBN-1-56308-322-1
PUB DATE	96
NOTE	210p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Teacher Ideas Press, P.O. Box 6633, Englewood, CO 80155 ($23, $28 outside North America).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Childrens Literature; Class Activities; *Cultural Awareness; *Cultural Pluralism; Elementary Education; Interpersonal Relationship; *Lesson Plans; Multicultural Education; *Reading; Self Concept; *Teaching Methods
IDENTIFIERS	*Diversity (Student)

ABSTRACT

This resource provides a variety of instructional models for using books to give students an awareness of and respect for their own and other people's cultures. The book is designed to help teachers develop various ways of integrating diversity into the curriculum. Through a variety of themes, discussion questions, and activities that challenge misconceptions and stereotypes, students have an opportunity to develop an understanding and acceptance of all cultures. Literature and authors that provide effective insights and understanding about diversity are identified, along with suggestions for using this literature to better inform students and stimulate positive action. The book has eight chapters. Chapter 1 focuses on authentic connections with literature, multicultural literature in the classroom, and characteristics of Grade 4-8 readers. Chapter 2 describes models for involving young readers in literature, and for incorporating multicultural literature into the classroom. Chapter 3 discusses themes and activities for exploring one's heritage as a means of understanding the past, the connection that exists between an individual and his or her cultural, racial, and ethnic heritage. Chapters 4 and 5 look at themes and activities relating to identity, first in seeking a sense of self, and then a sense of belonging. Chapter 6-7 present themes and activities relating to getting along with others--family and friends--and celebrating cultural diversity. Chapter 8 identifies picture books and novels that are "too good to miss," and discusses responding activities such as literature circles, book talks, and book sharing. Short descriptions of "authors too good to miss" (multicultural authors) are included. An extensive bibliography of reference works relating to multicultural literature and cultural diversity, as well as listings of folk literature and picture books, is included. (ND)

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